AN EYE FOR MURDER

BY UNA MCCORMACK

Characters:

THE DOCTOR
A Time Lord

PERI
An assistant

DOCTOR PETHERBRIDGE (F) —
The principal of a women's college at an ancient university, 60

DOCTOR RUTH HORWITZ (F) -
Physicist, a Jewish émigrée from Vienna with excellent, if accented, English, 27

DOCTOR JOAN DALTON (F) —
A communist, 30

DOCTOR MARIA BACKHOUSE (F) -
A fascist, 40

POLICEMAN

DIRECTOR - NICHOLAS BRIGGS
SCRIPT EDITOR - JONATHAN MORRIS
PRODUCER - DAVID RICHARDSON
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS - NICHOLAS BRIGGS
& JASON HAIGH-ELLERY
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(OPENING THEME)

1: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM (SCR), ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: CRACKLE OF A FIRE. SOFT MUSIC ON THE WIRELESS. TEACUPS CLATTER AGAINST SAUCERS; CHATTER. THE ATMOSPHERE IS WARM AND SECLUDED, WITH THE POTENTIAL TO BE CLAUSTROPHOBIC. CREAK OF AN ARMCHAIR AS BACKHOUSE TAKES THE SEAT OPPOSITE PETHERBRIDGE.

BACKHOUSE:
'Death is an Inconvenience'... Good heavens, principal, I shouldn't think that kind of thing customarily forms part of your reading!

PETHERBRIDGE:
On the contrary, a puzzle or two keeps the mind ticking over. You spend too much time amongst the Romans, Maria. A little lighter reading might leaven them.

BACKHOUSE:
I'm happy enough in the company of Cicero. (READS AUTHOR'S NAME) By Perry Medlock... What kind of a name is that?

PETHERBRIDGE:
Back in the day she was Susan Perry. An unmemorable young woman. No money, so it was either thrillers or marriage. I daresay thrillers have proven more financially rewarding than motherhood ever could.

BACKHOUSE:
Oh, she was one of ours?

PETHERBRIDGE:
It seems so. She's coming to tea next week. Back in the country after a stint in California. I might have her address the undergraduates. You should come along. See what the modern woman is like.

BACKHOUSE:
Not for me, although I wish her every success with her, er, work. Such a shame she's obliged to write under a man's name.

PETHERBRIDGE:
It's a man's world, Dr Backhouse.

2: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS, ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: A COLD, HIGH-CEILINGED SPACE. NO FIRE. A CLOCK TICKS ON THE MANTELPIECE. LOW-LEVEL ELECTRICAL HUM THROUGHOUT. CLUNK OF AN ADDING MACHINE. A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

HORWITZ:
(TO HERSELF) Ssh... Not now...

FX: CLUNK OF MACHINE.

DALTON:
(BEYOND THE DOOR) Ruth? Are you there?

FX: DOOR OPENS.

DALTON:
Ruth! There you are!

FX: MACHINE STOPS ABRUPTLY; HUM CONTINUES.

HORWITZ:
(CONCENTRATION LOST) Oh, what is it, Dr Dalton? What do you want?

DALTON:
I didn't see you at supper.

HORWITZ:
You didn't see me because I wasn't there.

DALTON:
Haven't you eaten?

HORWITZ:
I am trying to work! That is our purpose here, is it not?

DALTON:
Yes, but I don't think starvation is obligatory.

HORWITZ:
No, but concentration is.

DALTON:
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to disturb you. I wanted to make sure that you were well. You've been very quiet these past few days.

HORWITZ:
I've a great deal on my mind.

DALTON:
You've... not received another one, have you?

HORWITZ:
I don't want to talk about that. Was there anything else, Joan?

DALTON:
Well, there is something...

HORWITZ:
Yes?

DALTON:
(SMALL LAUGH) I can't help feeling you're avoiding me!

HORWITZ:
(UNCONVINCING) Of course I'm not. I'm very busy and I want to be left in peace.

DALTON:
You work too hard.

HORWITZ:
I work because it matters.

DALTON:
I could help, you know...

(FX: CLUNK OF THE ADDING MACHINE)

HORWITZ:
Could you leave, please, Joan?

DALTON:
All you have to do is say. You know I can help--

HORWITZ:
It's quite impossible--

DALTON:
It's not impossible. (HARDENING) Think carefully, Ruth. There's a choice coming for all of us, you know. You don't want to pick unwisely.

(MACHINE STOPS BRIEFLY, THEN PICKS UP AGAIN)

HORWITZ:
(WITH DIGNITY) You may leave, now, Dr Dalton. I have made my choices. I'll live with them.

3: EXT. THE MAIN COURT, ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: THE CALM OF A PLACE OF LEARNING. BICYCLE BELLS THE STREET BEYOND. A CAR PASSES AND RECEDES INTO THE DISTANCE. A TOWER CLOCK CHIMES QUARTER-TO. UNDERNEATH, THE STEADY BEEPITY-BEEP OF AN ENERGY SOURCE BEING TRACKED.

DOCTOR:
Nice enough for you, Peri?

PERI:
It's OK. I was expecting something more... gothic? I mean, sure, it's grand, but I thought these places were older. Mediaeval?

DOCTOR:
Not the women's colleges.

PERI:
Oh, I see. Keep the girls out as long as you can, and when you do let them in, put them where you can't see them. Still, at least the clothes are practical, if a little tweedy.

DOCTOR:
Tweedy? I'll have you know this London drape suit is the height of fashion... I could grow to like it.

PERI:
Well it makes a change from your usual explosion in a paint factory, I'll give you that.

FX: THE BEEPS BECOME SLIGHTLY MORE URGENT.

DOCTOR:
These energy readings are definitely stronger...

PERI:
And not what you'd expect from Earth in nineteen thirty-nine?

DOCTOR:
Assuredly not! From over in that block I'd say...

PERI:
I wonder if you can get a cup of coffee around here...

FX: CRUNCH OF GRAVEL AS PETHERBRIDGE APPROACHES.

DOCTOR:
The coffee? Is that all you can think about? Really, Peri--

PETHERBRIDGE:
Miss Perry? The porter said you were here. But, my dear girl, I wasn't expecting you for days!

PERI:
Ah...

DOCTOR:
(THINKING FAST) We caught an earlier train.

PETHERBRIDGE:
Well, how marvellous! Welcome back to St. Ursula's! I see you've brought a... gentleman friend with you?

PERI:
You know, I think there's been--

PETHERBRIDGE:
Good gracious, you sound decidedly transatlantic! I suppose Hollywood might have that effect... Dear girl, I'm keen to hear your stories — and we have quite a story of our own. I think you might find it rather intriguing.

PERI:
Oh, no--

PETHERBRIDGE:
(MOVING OFF) Come along! Tea is at four. Promptly.

PERI:
(WHISPERS) *Doctor*!

DOCTOR:
(SOTTO) Don't say a word. If we're inside, I can track down whatever's causing the energy anomaly.

PERI:
(SOTTO) But she thinks I'm someone I'm not!

DOCTOR:
(SOTTO) Happens to the best of us. Don't you want to hear her story?

PERI:
(SOTTO) No!

DOCTOR:
Well, I do. You'll be fine! Play it by ear. Now hurry up! Tea's at four. Promptly.

FX: CRUNCH OF GRAVEL.

PERI:
What do they do to you if you're late?

4: INT. PETHERBRIDGE'S ROOMS, ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: CLINK OF CUPS ON SAUCERS, TEASPOONS AGAINST CHINA.

PETHERBRIDGE:
Although, I must say, I wasn't entirely convinced by the scene near the end.

PERI:
The which?

PETHERBRIDGE:
The denouement in the cathedral.

PERI:
I'm... sorry it didn't work for you.

DOCTOR:
Dr Petherbridge, I entirely agree. I told Perry when I read it — Perry, I said, you have to *earn* a scene like that.

PETHERBRIDGE:
Quite.

PERI:
But, you have a story of your own, Dr Petherbridge?

PETHERBRIDGE:
Yes, indeed. Rather a sordid one.

DOCTOR:
(CURIOUS) Oh?

PETHERBRIDGE:
I must stress that I'm telling you this in the strictest confidence.

PERI:
Of course--

PETHERBRIDGE:
I trust you implicitly. But I'm afraid I don't know your... companion?

DOCTOR:
What? Who? Me? I assure you, ma'am, my lips are sealed!

PETHERBRIDGE:
I'll hold you to that. (TO PERI) I'm almost embarrassed... But it seems one of our number has taken it upon herself to express her distaste towards another of us in a most vicious and unappealing manner.

PERI:
What do you mean?

PETHERBRIDGE:
A series of unpleasant communications. All anonymous.

PERI:
Poison pen letters?

PETHERBRIDGE:
Indeed.

DOCTOR:
Directed towards the same person? Who?

PETHERBRIDGE:
The unfortunate Dr Horwitz. A gifted physicist, but one who has suffered a great deal of personal misfortune.

DOCTOR:
Such are the times we live in.

PETHERBRIDGE:
Quite. But in a small community such as ours, these things can be corrosive.

PERI:
Have you spoken to the police?

PETHERBRIDGE:
Good heavens, no! It's imperative this remains within college! Imagine what would happen if word got around. Those women, such harpies...

PERI:
That's awful!

PETHERBRIDGE:
So you'll look into the matter while you're here?

PERI:
I'm not sure it would be appropriate --

DOCTOR:
Nonsense, Peri! I'm always saying to her, Dr Petherbridge, she needs to keep living life if her books are to maintain their freshness. Of course we'll take the case!

PERI:
Oh, great...

PETHERBRIDGE:
(TO PERI) It's not usual, you know, to have men stay--

DOCTOR:
Don't think of me as a man... just the Doctor.

PETHERBRIDGE:
My dear man, we're all doctors.

PERI:
Think of him as my assistant. He's a dab hand at typing.

DOCTOR:
Peri...

PERI:
We kind of come as a package, Dr Petherbridge.

PETHERBRIDGE:
Oh, very well. I suppose we can find a corner... He's not to wander about though.

PERI:
You got that, Doctor? Don't go wandering off. Well, I guess I ought to talk to Dr Horwitz.

DOCTOR:
And while you're doing that, what do you suggest I do?

PERI:
Make yourself useful. Go and type something.

5: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

FX: DOOR OPENS, PERI AND HORWITZ ENTER.

HORWITZ:
Will this take long?

PERI:
Not long.

HORWITZ:
The letters speak for themselves.

PERI:
May I see them?

HORWITZ:
Miss Perry, they are not an edifying sight--

PERI:
Still, I might learn something. Fresh pair of eyes?

HORWITZ:
Oh very well...

FX: HORWITZ CROSSES TO HER DESK.

PERI:
How long have you been getting them?

FX: RUSTLE OF PAPERS AS HORWITZ SORTS THROUGH.

HORWITZ:
About two months. Maybe three.

PERI:
Three months? That's a long time! You've kept them all?

HORWITZ:
I threw the first two on the fire. It seemed the most appropriate response.

FX: HORWITZ CROSSES BACK TO PERI WHO RUSTLES THROUGH THE LETTERS.

PERI:
These are vile! These cartoons!

HORWITZ:
Miss Perry, it may be your privilege to ignore such things, but any Jew knows that such outrages are quite commonplace, and they are not confined to those parts of Europe where Herr Goebbels now controls the airwaves.

PERI:
I'm sorry.

HORWITZ:
If this is all you need I'll get back to work.

PERI:
Sure... What is your work?

HORWITZ:
It's very complicated to explain and even then I doubt you would understand.

PERI:
I bet... Can I keep the letters for a while?

HORWITZ:
By all means. I hardly wish to have them in my possession.

6: EXT. THE MAIN COURT, ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: THE BEEPS OF THE ENERGY TRACKING DEVICE.

DOCTOR:
(TO HIMSELF) There's definitely something going on over there...

FX: CRUNCH OF GRAVEL.

DALTON:
What on earth are you doing?

DOCTOR:
What?

DALTON:
And who are you exactly?

DOCTOR:
Well, who are you?

DALTON:
I'm Dr Joan Dalton, fellow of St. Ursula's — and I'm asking the questions. Who are you?

DOCTOR:
I am the Doctor.

DALTON:
Yes, well, everyone hereabouts is a doctor--

DOCTOR:
You don't happen to know anything about dark vacuum energy fluctuations, do you?

DALTON:
No--

DOCTOR:
Well, what use are you to me, then?

DALTON:
I do know a great deal about theoretical strategies to stimulate full employment.

DOCTOR:
Ah! An economist! Bad luck.

DALTON:
Yes, a genuine misfortune. You haven't explained who you are and what you're doing wandering around a women's college.

DOCTOR:
Well, I'm Miss Perry's assistant, of course!

DALTON:
Ah, our famous scribe! You're her... what did you say?

DOCTOR:
Her assistant. I'm quite the dab hand with the typewriter.

DALTON:
Her typist? Good grief, the revolution's finally begun. Well, Doctor whoever you are, allow me to accompany you back to your machine.

DOCTOR:
Really, I can find my own way...

DALTON:
I'm thinking of the undergraduates, you understand. They're so young, and reputation is such a fragile thing...

DOCTOR:
Oh, very well...

FX: THEY WALK AWAY.

7: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM.

PERI:
I'm sorry to disturb your day, Dr Backhouse.

BACKHOUSE:
I hope I can help. We're all appalled at this business and anxious to have the perpetrator exposed.

PERI:
All but one of you.

BACKHOUSE:
I beg your pardon?

PERI:
Well, one of you has been sending the letters.

BACKHOUSE:
Ah! Well, whoever she is, the rest of us want rid. If word got out, this could destroy the reputation of the college. No wonder they withhold degrees from us. Such a... womanish thing to do!

PERI:
Excuse me?

BACKHOUSE:
Anywhere else it would be resolved by a simple fistfight. But not amongst women!

PERI:
You know, I'm not going to get into that.

BACKHOUSE:
I started your book.

PERI:
Oh yeah? Which one?

BACKHOUSE:
'Last Trumpet'.

PERI:
(BUSKING IT) That's the one with the, er...

BACKHOUSE:
The intrigues within the orchestra are very well observed.

PERI:
(FINDING HER STRIDE) Oh, that one! Yeah, small groups of people can get intense like that. Particularly when they're stuck together.

BACKHOUSE:
Quite. I'm intrigued by your investigator. Dashing, aristocratic, somewhat tormented... Is this your ideal of virility, Miss Perry? Or does he play a part that you wish you might play, if this world were fairer towards our sex?

PERI:
He's more complicated than that. So you don't know any reason why Ruth Horwitz would receive this kind of attention?

BACKHOUSE:
The reason's perfectly clear. Dr Horwitz is a Jewess.

PERI:
I'm sorry? You mean she deserves these letters?

BACKHOUSE:
Now, I didn't say that! I gather you've been in America. Europe has changed. We live in divided times. Some people would be happy to see us more divided. Have you spoken to Dr Dalton?

PERI:
No, I haven't.

FX: BACKHOUSE RISES FROM CHAIR.

BACKHOUSE:
When you do, ask her about her politics. Ask her whose side she's on.

8: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM, LATER.

FX: QUIET CONVERSATION; SOME WIRELESS MUSIC. MOST OF THE FELLOWS ARE PRESENT, BUT THE MOOD IS MUTED.

DOCTOR:
... And the wretched woman marched me — marched me! — back to my room and lurked outside until I started typing!

PERI:
I wish I'd seen that... Which one was it?

DOCTOR:
That one, over there. Dalton. Thanks to whom I've found out nothing more about these energy readings. I have, however, decided to write a novel. Only a minor one, but--

PERI:
So that's Dalton? I've heard a lot about her.

DOCTOR:
Nothing good, I imagine.

PERI:
Well, no, Dr Backhouse all but said she was a Nazi--

PETHERBRIDGE:
(APPROACHING) Miss Perry, a word?

DOCTOR:
Shall I return to my typing?

PETHERBRIDGE:
You may stay, Doctor. This concerns you. (TO PERI) Miss Perry, I must insist your companion exercises some restraint.

PERI:
What's he been up to?

DOCTOR:
I only went for a walk!

PETHERBRIDGE:
(TO PERI) I must remind you that this is a women's college...

PERI:
Of course, principal. Doctor — best you keep to your room from now on.

DOCTOR:
And how, if I am banished to my garret, am I supposed to get on with investigating--

PERI:
We'll think of something!

FELLOW:
Could you quieten down, please?

FX: WIRELESS TURNED UP. IN THE BACKGROUND, OUTSIDE, AND OVER THIS, THE TOWER CLOCK SOFTLY CHIMES QUARTER-PAST.

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN:
I am speaking to you from the Cabinet Room of 10 Downing Street. This morning, the British Ambassador in Berlin handed the German government a final note, stating that unless we heard from them by 11 o'clock that they were prepared at once to withdraw their troops from Poland, a state of war would exist between us. I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received and that, consequently, this country is at war with Germany...

FX: WIRELESS TURNED OFF. BRIEF SILENCE.

DALTON:
That ghastly little man, Hitler!

BACKHOUSE:
I suppose you'd prefer Comrade Joe— [Stalin]

DALTON:
Better him than Hitler, Maria!

PETHERBRIDGE:
Ladies! Enough!

(BEAT)

PETHERBRIDGE (cont'd):
We have our differences, yes, but beyond that is our duty towards the young women in our care. We must be mindful of what this means for them, for their fathers and for their brothers. I shall have no quarrelling at a time like this.

PERI:
(SOFTLY) Doctor. I didn’t realize. So this is how it all starts...

DOCTOR:
Yes. This is a different world now, Peri.

9: INT. PERI'S ROOMS.

FX: SEMI-COMPETENT TAPPING ON A TYPEWRITER.

PERI:
Are you going to play with that all night?

DOCTOR:
I'm putting down my notes, as any good detective should.

PERI:
What notes? What have we learned? You've been holed up in here all day and I've hardly spoken to anyone since the morning. As if they all suddenly have something else on their minds--

DOCTOR:
We've learned Dalton is a communist.

PERI:
Have we?

DOCTOR:
And we've learned Backhouse isn't.

PERI:
How does that help us?

FX: TYPEWRITER BELL RINGS.

DOCTOR:
I'm not sure, yet. But it's interesting. And if it's interesting, chances are it's important.

FX: KNOCK ON DOOR.

HORWITZ:
(FROM OUTSIDE) Miss Perry, are you there?

PERI:
Of course – come in!

FX: DOOR OPENS.

HORWITZ:
I am very sorry to disturb you... (SOBS)

PERI:
Ruth, are you all right? Come and sit down — what happened?

HORWITZ:
(CONTROLLING HERSELF, BUT DISTRESSED) Somebody came to my room. Came up behind me while I was working... Miss Perry, they tried to kill me!

MUSIC: TRANSITIONAL.

10: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

DOCTOR:
So you're always here in the evening, Dr Horwitz?

HORWITZ:
I'm here all the time.

DOCTOR:
Working?

HORWITZ:
That's correct.

PERI:
So everyone in college would know to find her here. No big secret.

DOCTOR:
Hmm. You were sitting at your desk? You didn't see your assailant enter?

HORWITZ:
I was not at my desk. I was looking for some papers in the cabinet. My back was to the door. I heard the door open, I turned, and... I made a dash for it.

PERI:
You didn't see who it was?

HORWITZ:
I... didn't have time. Their face... was covered. But I understood their intent. I left at once!

FX: THE BEEPS OF THE ENERGY TRACKER – MORE URGENT THAN EVER BEFORE.

PERI:
(SOTTO)Doctor?

DOCTOR:
(SOTTO) Almost off the scale now...

HORWITZ:
Whatever is that?

FX: DEVICE IS SWITCHED OFF.

DOCTOR:
Oh, nothing... Dr Horwitz, there's only one way out of this room. How did you elude your would-be assassin?

HORWITZ:
I was lucky...

DOCTOR:
Lucky?

HORWITZ:
If one is in fear for one's life, one gains a certain strength. I pushed past and fled.

DOCTOR:
I see...

PERI:
Dr Horwitz... Ruth, this has gone beyond poison pen letters now. Has someone been hassling you? Was it Dr Dalton?

HORWITZ:
Dalton? What makes you ask me about her?

DOCTOR:
We know about her political leanings.

PERI:
What did she do, Ruth?

HORWITZ:
Joan... was keen to recruit me... I said no, of course!

PERI:
(TO THE DOCTOR) Do we call the police, Doctor?

DOCTOR:
As a matter of courtesy we should leave that decision to Dr Petherbridge.

11: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM.

DALTON:
Oh, this is preposterous!

PETHERBRIDGE:
You don't deny you attempted to suborn Dr Horwitz?

DALTON:
'Suborn' is a rather loaded word--

PERI:
We know you approached her.

DALTON:
Of course I did! I spoke to her about my beliefs. I attempted to discover whether she was supportive--

DOCTOR:
Never mind that! Did you write those letters?

DALTON:
Certainly not! What possible reason would I have? And so disgustingly cowardly!

DOCTOR:
Perhaps you thought Dr Horwitz's work might have some military application?

PERI:
Here's what we think happened. You tried to gain access to her work, and she refused you – despite those horrible letters. So you tried to take her work by force.

DALTON:
(HESITATION) You remember we're at war with the Nazis, not the Soviet Union?

PETHERBRIDGE:
I recall there is a non-aggression pact in place between those two powers. I'm sorry, Dr Dalton, this is now a matter for the authorities.

FX: PETHERBRIDGE PICKS UP THE PHONE.

DALTON:
Principal, I have done nothing wrong!

PETHERBRIDGE:
Operator, would you put me through to the police. Thank you.

12: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM.

FX: OUTSIDE, CLANG OF THE BELL OF A THIRTIES POLICE CAR.

PETHERBRIDGE:
I hope that's the last we hear of this. Miss Perry, Doctor, I'm grateful for your help – and for your continued discretion.

DOCTOR:
We wouldn't dream of breathing a word.

PETHERBRIDGE:
I should speak to the fellows... Oh, what a dreadful episode!

FX: DOOR OPENS; HORWITZ BURSTS IN.

HORWITZ:
What's this I hear about Dr Dalton?

PETHERBRIDGE:
I'm glad to say Dr Dalton is now in the care of the police--

HORWITZ:
No, no! Not Joan. There's been a misunderstanding--

PETHERBRIDGE:
Miss Perry, perhaps you could accompany Dr Horwitz back to her rooms? This has been a most distressing evening for her.

PERI:
Come on, Ruth. Let's get some cocoa and get you to bed.

13: INT. HALLWAY.

FX: FOOTSTEPS AS THEY RETURN TO HORWITZ'S ROOM.

PERI:
Why do you think there's been a mistake? Is there something else going on? To do with your work?

HORWITZ:
I... can't speak about that. (SUDDEN; QUIETER) Ssh!

PERI:
What is it?

HORWITZ:
(SOFT) The door to my room is open.

PERI:
Don't you leave it locked--?

FX: DOOR PUSHED OPEN SLOWLY.

PERI:
Good grief! Someone's done a thorough job here!

HORWITZ:
Everything is gone...

PERI:
Are you sure?

HORWITZ:
Of course I'm sure! My notes! My work! Everything! All gone!

14: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

DOCTOR:
Well, Dr Horwitz. Let me tell you what I know, and then you can consider whether you might offer me some explanations. I know you can't have escaped from your assailant via that door. I also know...

FX: SWITCHES ON THE ENERGY TRACKER — THE BEEPS ARE HECTIC NOW.

DOCTOR (cont'd):
That something in this room is causing dark vacuum fluctuations that are almost off the scale.

HORWITZ:
There is nothing I can tell you.

PERI:
Ruth, you can trust us. Honestly.

HORWITZ:
(SOME HESITATION) When I was a girl, my grandmother gave me a family heirloom, a strange little object that refracted light beautifully. Imagine what a child made of such a thing!

DOCTOR:
Ah, yes. I think I begin to see...

HORWITZ:
I was not the kind of child to call this magic. No, I wanted to understand. So I studied physics, in particular the properties of light, to better understand the nature of this gift.

DOCTOR:
Do you still have a drawing of this artefact, at least?

HORWITZ:
I can sketch it...

FX: SHUFFLE OF PAPER.

HORWITZ (cont'd):
I found, as I studied it closely, that it had many unusual powers.

DOCTOR:
Let me guess. Invisibility?

PERI:
Invisibility?

HORWITZ:
You're very sharp! Only small items. The second door over there – through which I escaped earlier – is the largest area I have been able to conceal thus far.

FX: PAPER RIPS.

HORWITZ (cont'd):
Here. This is what the artefact looks like.

PERI:
Eeuw! That's creepy! It's like an eye, staring at me!

DOCTOR:
Unsurprisingly, Peri, since that's what it is. An alien eye. Petrified, I imagine, to have survived so long.

PERI:
Not the only thing to be petrified round here...

DOCTOR:
You found, of course, that the effect was temporary. And unstable.

HORWITZ:
Yes. Most vexing.

DOCTOR:
So if I tried now to touch the door you used to escape...

FX: CRUMBLING, LIKE SAND COLLAPSING THROUGH A HUGE TIMER

PERI:
Doctor, it's crumbling away!

DOCTOR:
Not ideal for the applications you had in mind.

HORWITZ:
No, not in the least.

PERI:
What do you mean?

DOCTOR:
Think about it, Peri. This world is at war – the most mechanized, technologized war it has hitherto suffered.

HORWITZ:
Imagine if an ocean convoy could conceal itself. A fleet of aeroplanes. A whole invading army.

PERI:
Can you do that?

HORWITZ:
No, but I will, one day.

DOCTOR:
And, in the meantime, you've attracted considerable attention. Not least from Dalton and her comrades.

HORWITZ:
About Dalton--

FX: DOOR OPEN.

PETHERBRIDGE:
More news, I'm afraid. I called the fellows together, but one of them is missing. Dr Backhouse is nowhere to be found.

PERI:
Could Dalton have got to her?

HORWITZ:
No, wait, listen...

PETHERBRIDGE:
A car was seen leaving college about half an hour ago--

HORWITZ:
Pay attention! Joan Dalton tried to recruit me, yes, but it is not Joan Dalton that has been blackmailing me, and it is not Joan Dalton that threatened my family in Vienna with arrest and torture. Joan Dalton is a communist, yes, but Maria Backhouse is a Nazi!

DOCTOR:
And long gone! Dr Petherbridge, I'm afraid we will need to call on the assistance of the police again.

15. POLICE CAR.

FX: POLICE CAR DRIVES THROUGH RAIN, BELL CLANGING. CROSS-FADE TO INTERIOR... RAIN HEAVY ON THE WINDSCREEN.

DOCTOR:
Left – no, right! No, second right! She'll be heading for the coast!

POLICEMAN:
Any idea which coast, sir?

FX: THE BEEPS ON THE TRACKER START TO LESSEN IN INTENSITY.

DOCTOR:
Strange... Could the eye be losing some of its power...?

16: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

FX: POLICE CAR BELL RECEDING.

PERI:
I guess we can leave this to the Doctor and the boys in blue. Let's get that cup of cocoa going.

PETHERBRIDGE:
I think we've earned something stronger!

17: POLICE CAR.

FX: THE TRACKER IS EVEN WEAKER; THE RAIN HEAVIER.

DOCTOR:
It can't lose power so quickly... Wait a moment... Of course! How... inexpressibly, inexcusably and quite uncharacteristically stupid of me! Turn the car around! Right now!

POLICEMAN:
What's that, sir?

DOCTOR:
Backhouse isn't in that car! She still at St. Ursula's!

18: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

FX: CLINK OF GLASSES.

PETHERBRIDGE:
To a nasty problem solved – and without any scandal.

PERI:
I hope so...

HORWITZ:
Something is troubling you?

PERI:
Just that... we found Backhouse very easily. I thought she'd put up more of a fight... Oh, perhaps I'm over-worrying it...

FX: ROOM GOES QUIET. WINDOW RATTLES. UNDERNEATH, SOMEONE IS BREATHING.

HORWITZ:
Miss Perry. There is someone else here.

PETHERBRIDGE:
Nonsense!

PERI:
Ssh! Listen!

(BEAT)

FX: FOOTSTEPS SHUFFLING ON FLOOR.

HORWITZ:
She's here! She's been here all along!

PERI:
She's using the eye to make herself invisible!

PETHERBRIDGE:
(STERN) Maria, show yourself!

FX: FOOTSTEPS HURRYING ALONG STONE CORRIDOR.

HORWITZ:
Quickly, before she gets away!

19: EXT. THE COURT.

FX: RAIN HEAVY; WIND PICKING UP. FOOTSTEPS RUNNING OVER GRAVEL.

PERI:
(CALLING) Where is she? Where did she go?

FX: POLICE CAR SCREECHES UP, ITS BELL CLANGING; DOOR SLAMS.

DOCTOR: (DISTANT)
Peri!

PERI (cont'd):
Doctor! Backhouse is still here! She's using the eye!

DOCTOR:
I know, the readings are off the scale! Where is she – any idea?

FX: CHAPEL DOOR SLAMS.

PETHERBRIDGE:
Look! Someone's gone into the chapel!

FX: DOCTOR RUNS ACROSS GRAVEL.

DOCTOR:
(AS HE GOES) She's in terrible danger!

PETHERBRIDGE:
She's in danger? What about our girls?

20. INT. CHAPEL STAIRWELL.

FX: TWO SETS OF FOOTSTEPS: DOCTOR'S FOOTSTEPS GIVING CHASE.

DOCTOR:
(GIVING CHASE) Dr Backhouse! Maria! This is pointless! There's no way past – the only way out is up!

BACKHOUSE:
(FROM HIGHER) You won't get me! You can't get me as long as I have the eye!

FX: FOOTSTEPS AGAIN, HEADING UP.

21. EXT. ROOFTOP, COLLEGE CHAPEL

FX: WIND AND RAIN HEAVY NOW. NARROW DOOR BANGS OPEN AND THE DOCTOR COMES OUT, SLIPPING ON THE TILES.

DOCTOR:
Steady now... Maria! Listen! You have to give up the eye!

BACKHOUSE: (SLIGHTLY DISTANT)
Never!

DOCTOR:
As long as you have it, you're in mortal danger!

BACKHOUSE:
(LAUGHS) Ridiculous!

DOCTOR:
It isn't safe!

BACKHOUSE:
So I should hand it over? Let the police take me?

DOCTOR:
Forget the police! I'm trying to save your life!

FX: LOW RUMBLE OF THUNDER. BACKHOUSE SLIPS ON WET TILES.

BACKHOUSE:
(GASPS AS SLIPS THEN RECOVERS) It's wartime! They'll hang me!

DOCTOR:
If you don't give up the eye they won't get the chance!

BACKHOUSE:
Rubbish!

DOCTOR:
Can't you feel it? Your hands, shaking? Your feet, slipping?

FX: SCRAPE OF FEET ON TILES.

BACKHOUSE:
It's wet, you idiot! Go down, if you're frightened!

DOCTOR:
Maria, it's the eye. The dark vacuum energy is affecting you on a molecular level. You're falling apart!

BACKHOUSE:
You're lying! You're trying to frighten me!

FX: SOFTLY, THE CRUMBLING NOISE FROM BEFORE.

DOCTOR:
(URGENT) It's not a lie! If you don't want to hand the eye to me, then throw it away! Quickly, before it's too late!

FX: SLIPPING FEET ON TILES; CRUMBLING GATHERS PACE. THUNDER.

BACKHOUSE:
(FRIGHTENED) What's happening? I can't feel my legs!

FX: SLIPS TOWARDS EDGE OF ROOF.

BACKHOUSE (cont'd):
Help me! Doctor... I'm going to fall!

DOCTOR:
I can't unless you throw away the eye! Let me see your hand!

BACKHOUSE:
No!

DOCTOR:
Maria, please!

FX: CRUMBLING GATHERS PACE.

BACKHOUSE:
My hand! Where's my hand--? (SCREAMS AS SHE FALLS FROM THE TOWER)

DOCTOR:
Maria!

22. EXT. THE COURT.

FX: BACKHOUSE'S SCREAMS AS SHE FALLS TO HER DEATH.

PERI:
We've got to help her!

FX: BOTH RUN OVER GRAVEL. CRUMBLING LOUD NOW.

BACKHOUSE:
(MOANS.)

PERI:
Oh no...

PETHERBRIDGE:
Is there anything we can do?

FX: CRUMBLING FADES.

BACKHOUSE:
(GASPS... FADING)

PERI:
Too late. She's gone.

PETHERBRIDGE:
But what's this she was holding? Broken glass?

PERI:
I think... that's what's left of the eye.

23. INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM.

FX: NEXT MORNING. STORM HAS PASSED. BIRDSONG. A BICYCLE BELL RINGS. TEA IS SERVED.

PETHERBRIDGE:
A ghastly end! If I hadn't seen Backhouse with my own eyes — or not seen her — I wouldn't believe it.

DOCTOR:
And I'm afraid that not only was she holding the eye when she, well, disintegrated, but that Dr Horwitz's notes were lost in the storm. Blown away across the rooftops.

PERI:
What will this mean for your family, Ruth?

HORWITZ:
I received a telegram earlier. They left Vienna before war was declared. They reached Paris yesterday and will soon be bound for Britain.

DOCTOR:
Good news, indeed.

PERI:
I guess that's what made Backhouse change her plan from blackmail to theft.

DOCTOR:
She knew that she'd no longer have a hold over Ruth once she'd received news that her family were safe.

PETHERBRIDGE:
Perhaps, Doctor, I should ask you rather than Miss Perry, to address the undergraduates?

DOCTOR:
Oh, Peri will do just fine!

PERI:
Must I? Ah! I'll have to get my notes first. Doctor?

DOCTOR:
Hmm?

PERI:
Maybe we should go back to the police box? You know. Where I left my notes when I rang the police?

DOCTOR:
Oh yes!

PERI:
We won't be long.

FX: DOOR CLOSES.

PETHERBRIDGE:
Police box? What police box? There isn't a police box anywhere near - (FX: OPENS THE WINDOW) Where on Earth did that pop up from? Right outside the college gates, and without so much as a by your leave! I shall have them remove it at once...

(CLOSING THEME)